NORTH NORFOLK

# Your Choice Your Home

Version 03 01.08.11

# Scheme User Guide

NORTH NORFOLK

# Your Choice Your Home

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**Publisher:** Locata Housing Services Ltd **Editor:** Janette Boyle


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# What is Your Choice Your Home?

The **Your Choice Your Home** scheme is a Choice Based Lettings scheme delivered in partnership by North Norfolk District Council and housing associations with properties in the North Norfolk District area.

The housing associations with properties in North Norfolk are:

- Broadland Housing Association
- Cotman Housing Association
- Flagship Housing Group
- Guinness Trust
- Habinteg Housing Association
- Hanover Housing Association
- Housing 21
- Hastoe Housing Association
- Orbit East
- Places for People
- Riverside
- Victory Housing Trust
- Wherry Housing Association

The **Your Choice Your Home** scheme has a dedicated website **www.yourchoiceyourhome.org.uk**.

## How to contact us

If you have any questions about the **Your Choice Your Home** scheme or this Guide please contact the Housing Options Team at North Norfolk District Council:

- Tel: **01263 516375**
- Email: **housing@north-norfolk.gov.uk**

Or Write to us:

**Housing Options Team**
**North Norfolk District Council**
**Council Offices, Holt Road, Cromer**
**Norfolk NR27 9EN**

If English is not your first language and you would prefer to speak to us in your first language, please contact us and we will make arrangements to speak to you through our translation service, INTRAN.

## Making information accessible

We are committed to making our information as accessible as possible to our customers and therefore this document can be provided in a number of other formats including:

- large print
- audio disc or tape
- Braille
- another language if you cannot read English

If you want this guide in another format, please contact us.

IN TRAN
communication for all

**Please keep this guide for reference - it provides all the information you need to enable you to bid for properties under the North Norfolk 'Your Choice Your Home' Choice Based Lettings Scheme.**

**Please note, if you loose or misplace your copy of the Scheme User Guide you can view or download and print a copy from the Your Choice Your Home website. The Council will not provide you with another copy.**

**You need to bid if you want to be housed.**

# How Your Choice Your Home Scheme works

The **Your Choice Your Home** scheme uses the Housing Register and Choice Based Lettings policies agreed by North Norfolk District Council and partner agencies. These policies are available on the **Your Choice Your Home** website **www.yourchoiceyourhome.org.uk** or from the Housing Options Team at North Norfolk District Council.

This guide includes much of the information contained in the policies.

There are a number of steps in the **Your Choice Your Home** scheme:

Step 1 - Applying to go on the Housing Register

Step 2 - Banding of applications

Step 3 - Advertising properties

Step 4 - Bidding for properties

Step 5 - Letting properties

Step 6 - Feedback on properties

The guide covers each of these steps in more detail.

## Step 1:
## Applying to go on the Housing Register

If you are not currently on the Housing Register you can apply direct online at **www.yourchoiceyourhome.org.uk** or complete a paper application which can be downloaded from the website or from the Housing Options Team.

If you need help to complete your application you may have a friend, family member or support worker who can help you. If not the Housing Options Team will be pleased to help.

You will not be able to bid for an advertised property unless you are on the Housing Register. Once we receive your application we will assess it as quickly as possible and in most cases would expect that this would not take more than 14 days as long as your application is complete and we do not need any supporting information. There may be a delay in assessing your application if large volumes of applications are received. Paper applications will need to be entered onto the **Your Choice Your Home** IT system by the Housing Options Team and therefore it is likely that applications completed online will be assessed more quickly as they will not require entering.

We cannot guarantee that an application will be assessed in time to enable an applicant to bid in a particular bidding cycle and therefore you should not wait until you see a property that you are interested in before applying to join the Housing Register.

If you are accepted onto the Housing Register, will be sent a letter or email to tell you what band you are in and your relevant date (see Step 2: Banding of applications). You will also be told what size property you will be able to bid for. You will be sent a copy of this Guide, or an email link to an electronic copy of this guide if you apply online and have an email address. You will be given a unique **Your Choice Your Home** registration number which you will need to access the **Your Choice Your Home** website and to bid for properties using the phone or text.

If you are a housing association tenant who lives in North Norfolk you will be called a Tenant Applicant and all other applicants on the Housing Register including Council tenants and Housing Association tenants living outside North Norfolk will be called Homeseekers.

You must keep the Council informed of any changes to your circumstances, for example, changes to your household size or address. This is very important, as it could result in a change to your banding or the type of property you can bid for. If you do not keep us informed you may not be considered for a property for which you have been shortlisted or there may be a delay in the offering of a property for which you have been shortlisted. In addition you may miss out on the opportunity to bid for properties for which you would be otherwise able to bid for.

If you change address but wish to stay on the Housing Register you will neet to complete a new application. If you do this within 1 month of moving your original registration date will be carried over to your new application. If you apply more than 1 month after you move or notify us you have moved your old registration date will not be honoured and your registration date will be the date you re-applied.

Some applicants may not be accepted on to the Housing Register although this does not happen very often. If we are unable to accept you onto the Housing Register we will let you know why and you will have an opportunity to appeal against this decision (see Appeals).

There are many more applicants on the Housing Register who want to live in North Norfolk than available properties and therefore most applicants will not be successful in their bids for a property. You may want to consider other housing options and the Housing Options Team at the Council will be able to help you with this.

# Step 2:
## Banding of applications

The Council will assess your application and you will be placed in one of the 5 bands described below or you may be issued with an Emergency Card. For more information on the banding scheme, see a copy of the North Norfolk District Council Choice Based Lettings Policy, which is available from **www.yourchoiceyourhome.org.uk** or from the Housing Options Team of the Council.

## Emergency Card

The Emergency Card will only be issued to applicants in urgent housing need who need to move immediately or within a period of 6 weeks. Examples of when the Emergency Card could be issued are:

- An applicant is in hospital awaiting discharge but they cannot return home because their home is no longer suitable for them due to their medical and other needs
- An applicant is suffering severe harassment (which could include domestic violence) and there is an immediate risk of harm if they stay in their home
- A housing association tenant in North Norfolk needs to be moved urgently so the property can be repaired, modernised or redeveloped.

The Emergency Card will be valid for 6 weeks. If after 6 weeks the applicant has not successfully bid for a property, their use of the Emergency Card will be reviewed, the Emergency Card will then either be removed or the period it can be used for extended.

## Band 1

Contains those households who are in very high housing need and who need to move as soon as possible. Applicants in Band 1 will be:

- Households accepted as homeless (full duty)
- Households meeting 2 or more of the following criteria:
  - In insanitary housing
  - In overcrowded housing
  - In otherwise unsatisfactory housing
  - Need to move on medical grounds
  - Need to move on welfare grounds
  - Need to move to a particular locality to prevent hardship occurring
- Households threatened with homelessness within 28 days and likely to be accepted (full duty)
- Households for which the Council has a duty to re-house under the Rent Agriculture Act 1976
- Housing association tenants living in North Norfolk who are under-occupying (have more bedrooms than they need) their property by 1 or more bedrooms.

## Band 2

Contains those households who are in high housing need. Applicants in Band 2 will be:

- Households meeting one of the following criteria:
  - In insanitary housing
  - In overcrowded housing
  - In otherwise unsatisfactory housing
  - Need to move on medical grounds
  - Need to move on welfare grounds
  - Need to move to a particular locality to prevent hardship occurring
- Households who are homeless or threatened with homelessness within 28 days but who have not been and who are unlikely to be accepted
- Households accepted as homeless but without a local connection and who have been referred to another area.

## Band 3

Contains those households who are in medium housing need. Applicants in Band 3 will be:

- Households likely to become homeless within 2 months and likely to be accepted as homeless (full duty)
- Households who have 2 or more unsatisfactory housing circumstances which have an effect on the household i.e. living in overcrowded circumstances (lacking at least one bedroom), sharing facilities, living in insecure housing, lack of stability in housing history.

## Band 4

Contains those households who are in low housing need. Applicants in Band 4 will be:

- Households who have one unsatisfactory housing circumstance which has an effect on the household i.e. living in overcrowded circumstances (lacking at least one bedroom), sharing facilities, living in insecure housing, lack of stability in housing history.

## Band 5

Contains those households who are not eligible for the Emergency Card or Bands 1 to 4 as well as

- Households who would otherwise be included in a higher band or who have been demoted from a higher band because:
  - it is considered that they have the financial resources to meet their own housing needs
  - it is considered that they were unsuitable to be a tenant at the time of application but where it is not considered appropriate to exclude them from the register
  - it is considered that they have deliberately worsened their housing circumstances
  - they can take corrective action to improve their housing circumstances but they are unwilling to do so
  - the homelessness duty has been discharged through having made a reasonable offer of accommodation which has been refused
  - they are under 18 and are not being considered under the Norfolk Joint Protocol to address the needs of homeless young people in Norfolk
  - they are in supported housing but are not ready to move onto independent living.

If you feel that you have been placed in the wrong Band you can appeal against this decision (see Appeals).

# Step 3:
## Advertising properties

Properties will be advertised every week on the **Your Choice Your Home** website **www.yourchoiceyourhome.org.uk** We will also ensure that the property adverts are widely distributed and available to view at a range of locations across the North Norfolk district area to ensure that they are accessible to applicants including:

- the offices of North Norfolk District Council in Cromer
- the offices of partner housing associations
- libraries

The **Your Choice Your Home** website **www.yourchoiceyourhome.org.uk** will have up to date information on where adverts are available to view, alternatively contact the Housing Options Team of the Council.

You can access the **Your Choice Your Home** website via any computer with internet access, if you do not have internet access at home why don't you ask a friend or relative if you can use theirs or go along to the library or an internet café, alternatively your support worker might be able to help.

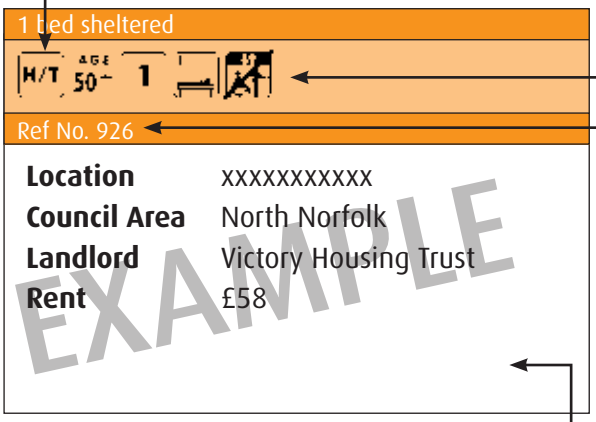
The adverts will give you information about each available property to enable you to decide if it is suitable to meet your needs. The adverts include:

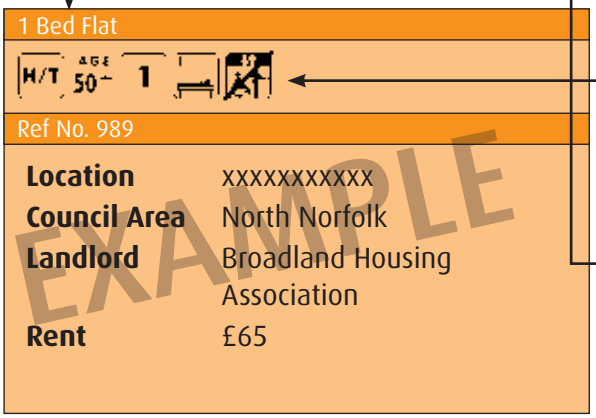
- a photograph (where available)
- the property reference number
- symbols providing information on the property
- symbols to show which applicants are eligible
- the location of the property (the full address of the property will not be shown)
- the landlord
- the rent
- other relevant information

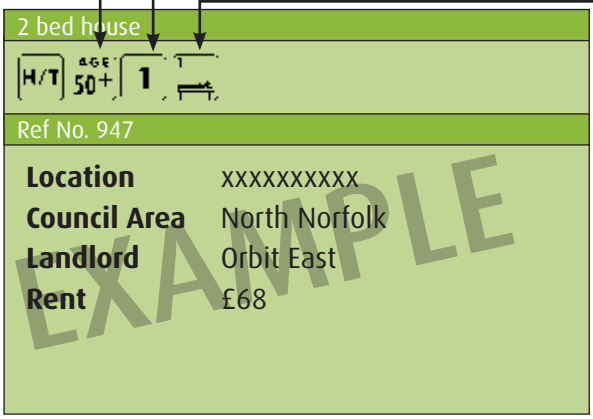
# The Adverts

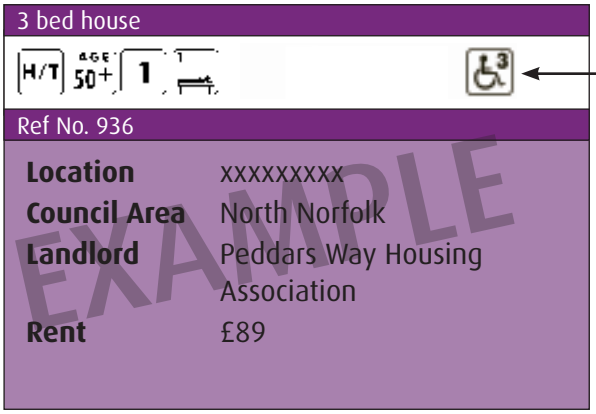
The adverts will be colour coded so each size of property has a different colour background. At the top of each property it will show the size and type of property for example 1 bed flat.

Symbols are used on the adverts to provide information about the properties. These are explained below:




## Key to advert symbols

This is used for bidding to identify which property you want to bid for

T — The property is available for Tenants

H/T — The property is available for Homeseekers and Tenant Applicants

This shows the property has a lift

This shows the property has no lift

Number of bedrooms and property type

Sheltered housing (Defined by white background)

AGE 50+ AGE 55+ AGE 60+ AGE 65+

Property designed for people this age or above

G 1 2 3+

This shows the floor level the property is on, if it is a flat or maisonette

1 2 3 4

Number of bedrooms in the property

Mobility Group 1 - Suitable for wheelchair user indoors and outdoors (defined by symbol and white bar)

Mobility Group 2 - Suitable for people who cannot manage steps or stairs and may use a wheelchair some of the day (defined by symbol and white bar)

Mobility Group 3 - Suitable for people only able to manage 1 or 2 steps or stairs (defined by symbol and white bar)

LC — Local Connection - See section Some Properties have a Local Connection sign.

# Adverts and Symbols

This shows that a property is being advertised for sale on a shared ownership basis, the advert will show the cost of the share being sold, the cost of the rent and any service charge. In some cases this will show the minimum share that can be sold. Any applicant interested in shared ownership must be able to afford the buy the share that is being sold through a mortgage, savings/investments or investments and mortgage/combination of savings.

PR This shows that a property is being advertised by a private landlord. The advert will show the name of the landlord and the rent.

**Important message:** The photograph in the advert may not be of the actual property available but maybe a property of a similar type in that location. You should not therefore visit the property in the hope that you can have a look around. The property may still be occupied and continue to be the home of someone who might find such a request distressing. You must not approach any one living in a property which you think has been advertised.

The details of advertised properties can also be heard on a recorded message that can be accessed by ringing 01263 516342. You will be asked to press a number to identify the size or type of property you want to hear details about e.g. press 1 for bedsit accommodation, press 2 for sheltered accommodation, press 3 for 1 bed accommodation etc. On selecting the number you want you will be advised of the number of the current bid round, the date the bid round opened and the date the bid round closes. You will then be given details of the advertised properties including the reference number (you will need this to place a bid), any restrictions on who can bid i.e. if it is for tenant applicants only and the location of the property. Once the details of all of the advertised properties of that type have been given the message will end. You will need to ring again if you want to hear the details of more than one type of property. Please note that for some types of property there will be no properties advertised in that particular bidding cycle.

Please note that you cannot place a bid on this number and will have to place a bid either through the website or by telephone or text (see section on bidding on page 11)

From August 2011 some housing associations will be renting some properties at the new Affordable Rent, this rent is higher than current housing association rents, and will not exceed 80% of local market rents for the type and size of property in any particular location. As some existing housing association tenants will be able to transfer to another housing association property, some properties will not show a rent, in this case the rent will be shown as "tba" (to be advised). If you are the successful bidder for a property which was advertised with the rent shown as tba, please ask the housing association what the rent will be before you make a decision on whether to accept the property. Please note that affordable rents will be covered by housing benefit in the same way as social rents and will not be restricted to the Local Housing Allowance as with privately rented properties.

# Step 4:
## Bidding for properties

Within each week there is a 6 day period when you can place bids for the advertised properties that you are interested in - this is called the 'bidding cycle'. Each bidding cycle opens on a **Friday at 9am and closes the following Thursday at 9am.** This gives you a limited amount of time to think about the properties you would like to bid for, to have a look around the area in which the properties are located if you are not familiar with them, consult with family and others including support workers, make arrangements for any help you might need with bidding and make your bid.

If you need help with bidding ask a friend, family member or support worker to help, they can bid on your behalf via the internet if they have your unique registration number and your date of birth. The Housing Options Team at the Council will be pleased to help you bid or bid on your behalf with your permission. This help can be available for as long as you need it. If in the future you need help with bidding, contact the Housing Options Team.

If you bid for a property you must ensure that you are contactable preferably by phone but otherwise by letter in case your bid is successful. If your contact details change please let the Council know as soon as possible so your application details can be updated.

# Things to consider before bidding

When choosing a property you are interested in, you need to consider a number of things:

**What can I bid for?**

Your welcome letter will tell you what sizes of property you can bid for (are eligible for) based on the size and needs of your household. If you bid for a property you are not eligible for your bid will not be registered.

Before you bid for a property please check the advert carefully checking all of the symbols and other information in the advert to make sure that it is a property you can bid for and that the property will meet the needs of your household.

**Is the property available to both Tenant Applicants and Homeseeekers or just Tenant Applicants?**

Most properties will be available for both Homeseekers and Tenant Applicants but some will be advertised as available to Tenant Applicants only. Your bid will not count if the property is advertised for a Tenant Applicant only and you are a Homeseeker.

**How many properties can I bid for in each bidding cycle?**

You can bid for as many properties as you want in each bidding cycle, but you can only bid for properties that you are eligible for.

**Is there an age restriction?**

Some properties may have a minimum age requirement; any age restrictions will be clearly stated in the advert.

**Who can bid for sheltered housing?**

Sheltered housing will be offered to applicants who will benefit from the level of support offered in this type of accommodation. Sheltered housing is usually only available for people aged 60 or over.

**Some properties have a mobility sign**

This is intended to provide a guide to people who have a mobility need to help them identify which properties will be suitable for them. This does not restrict anyone else from bidding for these properties, but preference may be given to applicants who need this level of mobility or the adaptations provided.

**Some properties have a Local Connection sign**

Some properties will be advertised with the Local Connection sign. Only schemes which have been provided to meet local housing need (called Exception Housing Schemes) will be advertised with the Local Connection sign. For all properties on these schemes applicants who have a local connection to the parish in which the scheme is located or the immediately adjoining civil parishes will be prioritised for the properties. A local connection is living in, working in, having a family member who lives in, previously

living in or having a family member who previously lived in the parish. After the bidding deadline has closed the shortlist will place all bidders in order of their local connection with those bidders with the strongest local connection being placed at the top of the shortlist irrespective of which band they are in. This does not apply to applicants in Band 5 as they will only be considered after all other applicants. You can still bid for a property which is subject to the Local Connection sign if you do not have a local connection but you will be placed below those that have a local connection on the shortlist. The advert will clearly show which parishes you need to have a connection to in order to qualify as having a local connection.

For new Exception Housing Schemes only one advert will be placed for all the properties that are available. If you are interested in any of the properties you only need to bid once and can be considered for all the properties.

### Pets

The property advert will say if pets are allowed.

### Shared Ownership Properties

All households will be able to bid for any size or type of shared ownership property advertised, although when the property is shortlisted any bidder who can not afford to purchase the share being sold will not be considered for the property. For more information on shortlisting shared ownership properties see Step 5.

### Private Rented Properties

All households will be able to bid for any size or type of private rented property advertised. If the landlord has any criteria for which types of household they will consider for the property, this will be included in the property. For information on how private rented properties will be shortlisted please see Step 5.

## Check out the location of the property

Look for the location of the property on a map or visit the local area to make sure it really is a place you would want to move to. North Norfolk is a very rural area so think about the services you might need access to including:

- schools
- shops
- public transport
- child care facilities
- employment opportunities
- leisure opportunities
- GP/Dentist
- Bank/Post Office

If you are unsure as to what services an area has contact the Housing Options Team of the Council. This information is also available on the UpMyStreet website by clicking on the link from the advert on the **Your Choice Your Home** website.

# You can bid in 4 ways:

## 1. Bidding by Internet

1. Open the **Your Choice Your Home** website, **www.yourchoiceyourhome.org.uk**
2. Click on "Log In" and enter your registration number and date of birth and click "Log In"
3. Select "Make a Bid" to see the properties you are eligible to bid for
4. Click on "Bid" for the property you want to bid for
5. Repeat step 4 for each property you want to bid for

If you change your mind you can delete your bid as long as the bidding cycle has not closed.

## 2. Bidding by Telephone

1. Call **0906 294 1820**. You will hear "Welcome to the **Your Choice Your Home** property line. Please enter the number section of your reference number." Eg 12345
2. Enter the numerical part of your registration number using the key pad. Once you have entered the correct number you will hear "Thank you. Please enter the day number of your birth date."
3. Enter the day number of your date of birth. If your date of birth is 08/01/1958 type in 08, if your date of birth is 16/04/1970 type in 16. Once you have entered the correct number you will hear: "Thank you. Please enter the property reference number for your first bid."
4. Enter the three digits of the property reference number from the advert. Once you have entered the correct number you will hear: "Thank you. If you would like to add an additional bid, press one, or press the star key to complete your bidding."
5. If you have pressed one you will hear: "Please enter the property reference number for your second bid, or press the star key to complete your bidding."
6. Enter the three digits of the next property reference number. Once your have entered the correct number you will hear: "Thank you. If you would like to add an additional bid, press one, or press the star key to complete your bidding."
7. If you have pressed one you will hear: "Please enter the property reference number for your third bid, or press the star key to complete your bidding."
8. Repeat steps 6 to 7 until you have entered all your bids. Once you have completed your bids press the star key and you will hear: "Thank you. Thank you for calling the Your Choice Your Home property line."

**If you have made errors you will hear instructions as follows:**

If you have made an error with your registration number, you will hear: "I am sorry, the reference number you have entered is not recognised. Please try again." Enter your registration number again, making sure that you are only entering the number part of your registration number. If you get your registration number wrong a second time you will hear: "I am sorry, the reference number you have entered is still not found. Please check with North Norfolk District Council and call again."

If you have made an error with your day of birth you will hear: "I am sorry the day of birth you have entered does not match the day of birth specified for your reference number. Please re-enter using your telephone now."

If you bid for a property you are not eligible for you will hear: "I am sorry you are not eligible to bid on that property, please try again."

Calls cost 25p per minute from a BT landline (subject to change) and you will be able to make 3 bids in one minute. Other phone providers may charge more and using a mobile phone will cost more.

## 3. Bidding by Text message

1. To begin making bids open a new text message
2. Enter your registration number using the keys, eg NNDC12345
3. Then follow it immediately with a hash sign: eg NNDC12345#

4. Now enter the property reference number of your first bid followed immediately by a hash sign. Eg NNDC12345#123#

If you have finished bidding then send. If not, keep following the instructions below.

6. Enter the property reference number of your next bid followed immediately by a hash sign. Eg NNDC12345#123#456#

If you have finished bidding then send. If not, repeat step 6 until you have entered all your bids

7. When you have entered all your bids send your text message to 07781 472 726

Most mobile phone companies charge SMS text messages at around 10p per text.

- To add numbers to your message keep pressing the keys until you get the number you want and select (make sure you do not have predicta text on).
- On most mobile phones to find the hash sign first press the star key then select the hash sign.
- You can enter your bids in both upper and lower case.
- Check your registration number and bids are correct before sending.
- **Please note that you will not receive a text message to confirm the bids that you have made.**

## 4. The Council can bid on your behalf with your permission

This service will only be available to you if you are vulnerable and are unable to bid for yourself and you do not have someone who can help. You will need to give us your permission in writing and we will only place bids for properties which you have said you want to be considered for in the areas you have said you want to live. It is likely that we will be placing bids for a number of applicants and therefore we will not be able to contact each individual applicant when we make a bid on their behalf. The bids placed will be recorded in the applicant's bidding history and we can review the bids that were placed with an applicant when required.

# Step 5:
## Letting properties

At the end of the bidding cycle, a shortlist of bidders is drawn up for each property. The shortlist will only include applicants who have made bids for the property and who are eligible to bid for the property.

The shortlist will place all bidders in the following order:

- Band
- Applicants with a connection to North Norfolk
- Relevant Date

The applicant in the highest band who has a connection to North Norfolk will be at the top of the shortlist. If there is more than one applicant in the same band and they all have a connection to North Norfolk the Relevant Date will be used to prioritise the applicant who has been waiting the longest. Applicants in the same band who do not have a connection to North Norfolk will be placed after those that do in the shortlist. The applicant at the top of the shortlist will be offered the property unless they are not suitable for the property.

For properties on Exception Housing Schemes LC different rules apply to who will be at the top of the shortlist, please see the section "Some properties with the Local Connection Sign" for more information.

For shared ownership properties, the property can only be sold to a household who can afford to purchase the share being sold. Housing association tenants in North Norfolk are given first preference for shared ownership properties before Homeseekers. Unless the shared ownership property is on an Exception Housing Scheme preference will be given to applicants who have been waiting the longest (see above) and who need the size of property being advertised.

For private rented properties, some private rented landlords will contact bidders to discuss whether the property is suitable for them. In other cases the Council will provide the landlord with one or more names for the property. The Council will consider when shortlisting whether the bidder can afford to rent the property and if they would be reliant on Housing Benefit whether they would (subject to their

income and circumstances) be eligible for full Housing Benefit, any shortfall in rent must be affordable to the prospective tenant. Private rented properties will therefore not be shortlisted in the same way as housing association properties or shared ownership properties. Please note not all properties advertised will have a rent that falls within the Local Housing Allowance.

## Relevant Date

The relevant date for applicants with an Emergency Card or in Bands 1 or 2 will be the date they were issued with the Emergency Card or placed in Band 1 or 2. For Bands 3, 4 and 5 the relevant date will be the date their housing application was registered.

## Connection to North Norfolk

You will have a connection to North Norfolk if you or your partner have lived in the North Norfolk District Council area for 6 months out of the past 12 months or 3 years out of the past 5. You will also have a connection if you or your partner work in the district or have a close family member who has lived in the district for the past 5 years.

## Viewing

The bidder at the top of each property shortlist will be contacted by the landlord of the advertised property. Applicants at the top of a shortlist will normally be contacted within a week of the bidding cycle closing. Some landlords will contact the top 3 or 5 bidders, if they do this, they will tell the shortlisted bidders their position on the shortlist. These bidders may all be given a chance to view the property.

If you are shortlisted and are invited to view a property and you have changed your mind or are unable to go along at the time given please let the landlord know.

If you successfully bid for more than one property in the same bidding cycle, you will be asked which property you would prefer.

## Offers

The landlord of the property will consider the suitability of each applicant in order on the shortlist until a suitable tenant has been found and the property will then be offered to that applicant. If the applicant refuses the offer of the property the landlord will continue to use the shortlist to find a suitable tenant. If there are no suitable applicants the property may be re-advertised in a future bidding cycle. If a property is re-advertised the eligibility criteria may be changed.

If you accept the offer of a tenancy you can not be considered for any other properties in the current or future bidding cycles unless you decide to refuse the property you have accepted.

You do not have to accept an offer of a property, but if you do not we would like to know the reasons why as this will help us ensure that the adverts are easy to understand and include the right information.

If you are someone to whom the Council has accepted a homelessness duty, special rules may apply and you should contact the Council if you are considering not accepting the offer of a property.

Before you are offered a property the landlord will ask you to provide proof of your identity and any other relevant information for example proof of parental responsibility for any children that live with you.

## Direct Lets

The North Norfolk Choice Based Lettings Policy allows for some properties to be let without being advertised, this is called a Direct Let. Direct Lets will only be made in certain limited circumstances. For more information see the North Norfolk Choice Based Lettings Policy.

# Step 6:
## Feedback

It will not be possible to tell you individually if your bids have been unsuccessful but you can get this information from the **Your Choice Your Home** website where you will also be able to see where in the shortlist your bids were under 'bidding history'.

Feedback will be given on properties that have previously been advertised once they are let. The feedback will be

included on the website and alongside adverts. Feedback will be given as soon as possible after the property has been let. An example feedback report can be seen on page 15.

The feedback will show you the band of the applicant who the property was let to, whether they had a connection to North Norfolk and their Relevant Date. It will also tell you the total number of bids received for that property. No personal information will be shown though.

Below is an explanation of the information that is provided in the feedback report.

**Bid Cycle Date**

This is the date of the Bidding Cycle that the advert appeared in.

**Advert Reference**

With the bidding cycle date, this gives a unique identity to any advert.

**Size and Property Type**

This provides a description of the property advertised.

**Location**

This tells you where the property is, but the full address will not be shown.

**Bids**

This is the total number of bids that were made for each property at the close of the bidding cycle.

**Lettings Information**

This shows the Band, whether an applicant has a connection to North Norfolk and the Relevant Date It also shows whether they are a Tenant Applicant or a Homeseeker.

**Feedback on Direct Lets**

At least once a year feedback will be provided on the number of properties that have been let as Direct Lets.

**Some properties are excluded from feedback**

Properties on Exception Housing Schemes or which are advertised for shared ownership or private rent are excluded from feedback. These properties will not show in the feedback on Property Lists or in your personal feedback. Every year we will provide details of the number of properties let on Exception Housing Schemes, as well as the number of private rented properties which have been let through the scheme and the number of properties sold as shared ownership.

# How feedback can be used

Look at the feedback for both the properties you have bid for and those that you have not bid for. The feedback will help you decide whether you need to re-consider what to bid for.

**For properties that you made a bid for:**

- What band was the successful applicant in?
- If they are in the same band as you did they have a connection to North Norfolk? What was their relevant date?
- How do these compare to your banding, connection to North Norfolk and relevant date?
- If they are close then you might not have to wait long before you are successful in your future bids.
- How often are the properties you want advertised?
- If they are not advertised very often then even if you were close to a successful applicant you might still have a long time to wait for another property of that type

**For properties that you did not bid for:**

- What band was the successful applicant in?
- If they are in the same band as you did they have a connection to North Norfolk? What was their relevant date?
- If you had bid for the property could you have been the successful applicant?
- Is it more important for you to get a property that you really want or do you need to be housed quickly?
- Would you be more likely to be the successful bidder if you bid for a different type of property?
- Would you be more likely to be the successful bidder if you bid for a property that attracts fewer bidders?
- Would you be more likely to be the successful bidder if you bid for a property in a different area?

You will be able to see in some instances that applicants in Band 3, 4 and 5 may never be offered certain property types in areas. If you are in one of these bands, you may wish to consider bidding for different property types of areas or consider other housing options.

**This is an example of a Feedback Report:**

| Bid cycle | Advert ref. | Size | Property type | Location | Bids | Band | Lettings Information | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | | | Connection to North Norfolk | Relevant date | Application type |
| 24 Jun 2011 | 742 | 3 bed | House | Preston Road, North Walsham | 83 | 2 | Yes | 16 Aug 2010 | Transfer |
| 24 Jun 2011 | 734 | 2 bed | House | Riverview Close, Fakenham | 59 | 2 | Yes | 15 Mar 2011 | Transfer |
| 8 Jul 2011 | 760 | 2 Bed | Flat | Petersfield Drive, Horning | 99 | 2 | Yes | 13 Apr 2011 | Homeseeker |
| 8 Jul 2011 | 758 | 2 bed | Bungalow | Granary Way, Tunstead | 6 | 5 | Yes | 8 Jun 2011 | Homeseeker |

# Appeals and Complaints

You can ask us to have another look at any decision made as part of the **Your Choice Your Home** scheme. You need to let us know in writing what decision you would like us to look at again within 21 days of the decision being made. The decision will be reviewed by the Housing Services Manager of North Norfolk District Council. We aim to let you know the Housing Services Manager's decision in writing within 28 days of receiving your request. However, this might not be possible if we receive a large number of requests. If we cannot let you know within 28 days we will let you know and tell you when we think we will be able to let you know.

If you are not happy with the outcome of your appeal you can make a complaint under the Council's Complaints Policy. A copy of the policy and a complaints form will be provided on request.

You can use the Complaints Procedure to make a complaint about other issues too. Please discuss this with the Housing Options Team of the Council.

If you have made a complaint and you are still not happy you may be able to take the matter further through the Local Government Ombudsman or through the judicial review process. Please discuss this with the Housing Options Team of the Council or seek independent advice from the Citizens Advice Bureau, Shelter or a solicitor.

# Tell us what you think of the Your Choice Your Home scheme

We are interested to know what you think about the **Your Choice Your Home** scheme. If you have any comments, views or stories about your experience of using the scheme please let us know. We will use your comments and views to help ensure that the scheme operates well and to make future improvements to the scheme. If you have any comments about the contents of this scheme user guide or any other information you have received on the scheme please let us know so we can make sure that the information we provide to applicants in the future is useful. Please send your comments, views or stories to;

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